



St Mary's Christian Brothers' Grammar School

SCHOOL VISITS POLICY

September 2024

St. Mary's management and staff



accept that school journeys/visits

are an essential and desirable part of every child's education. Teachers are encouraged to take their pupils out of the classroom and into the wider world so that the children's education is given added breadth and meaning. This policy is intended to indicate the circumstances/conditions under which such trips should be organised so that the "successful and safe completion of educational visits" (Educational Visits – Best Practice 2009 Education Authority) are observed.

School trips organized by any member of staff and involving any pupils of the school, whether inside or outside of school hours, must be organised in accordance with the conditions laid out in the EA's publication "Educational Visits – Best Practice 2009". They must also fulfil the conditions laid out in this policy document. Where there is any conflict between the two documents, school policy must take priority.

1. ELIGIBILITY

Any journey/visit organised by departments/teachers should be accessible to all pupils in the school provided such pupils are suitably qualified to benefit from their involvement in the trip according to their age, aptitude and ability and within the constraints of numbers that it is possible to accommodate.

The choice of teachers to accompany any trip shall be subject to the approval of the Principal and Board of Governors.

2. AIMS

Any journey/visit must have clearly stated aims and an educational purpose arising out of the curriculum and/or general policies of the school. These aims may be academic or social or a combination of both and will indicate the appropriateness of the outing.

3. CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL

Any journey/visit of short duration must first be sanctioned by the Pastoral VP. In the case of trips abroad such approval must be sought from the Board of Governors in the school year prior to the trip taking place. This approval must be sought before any other agencies are approached and before any monies are paid. All other trips must seek approval as soon as is practicable. Trips involving regular or repeat visits such as football outings need only seek approval once, at the beginning of the period during which the activity takes place (see Appendix 1: Form ST4).

Criteria to be used in granting approval to trips abroad shall include the following: -

- a) All such trips must be shown to be appropriate and to have educational justification.
- b) All such trips must be organised according to the procedures outlined in this policy and must have sought approval in the recommended manner and with the appropriate notice to the Vice-Principal in Charge of Cover (see appendix 2). Any preliminary approval granted may be withdrawn if the school management considers that there are deficiencies in organisation that would prejudice the successful implementation of the trip.
- c) In order to minimise disruption to normal school business it is at the discretion of the Board of Governors to limit the number of trips in any school year.
- d) In order to comply with current Department of Education regulations regarding charging, all school trips abroad must have more than 50% of their duration outside normal school hours. In effect, school trips abroad must take place partly during school holidays.
- e) All school trips must be organised in accordance with the guidelines of EA, as well as this school policy.
- f) Where there are more than two/three trips applying for approval in any one year, approval shall be

considered on a first come, first served basis, all other things being equal.

4. PARENTAL APPROVAL

Parental approval must be sought for every school trip. Parents should be provided with as much information about the trip as possible. The following guidelines should be considered as a minimum requirement: -

- The purpose of the visit
- Dates and times
- Pupils for whom the trip is organised
- Destination, mode of travel, itinerary & accommodation (where appropriate)
- Provisional programme (where appropriate)
- Name of leader, deputy leader and other adults
- A detailed itinerary, list of names and addresses of those taking part is submitted well in advance to the Senior Teacher in charge of School Trips.

For trips abroad these guidelines above should be supplemented by a more complete account of the trip as follows: -

- The purpose of the trip and the activities
- Names of the leaders, other staff and other adults
- Places to be visited
- Dates and times of departure and arrival
- Addresses of hotels. etc.
- Method of travel & name of company/transport company, address and phone no.
- Destinations, itineraries and programme
- Emergency telephone numbers
- Procedure for contacting parents in an emergency
- Code of Conduct for St. Mary's Pupils on Residential Trips (see Appendix 3 & 4)
- Documents that need to be brought
- Main details of insurance cover

5. INSURANCE

All trips organised through the school must be adequately insured. The school has existing employer's liability insurance and motor insurance which covers routine day trips provided: -

- The trip has been properly sanctioned by the school.
- The trip is adequately supervised.
- The trip does not take pupils into unusually hazardous areas/circumstances.
- Parental consent has been sought.
- Minibuses do not exceed the designated number of passengers.
- Trips abroad will require additional insurance to cover the usual hazards of travelling in foreign countries and this will usually be supplied by the travel company. Trips involving potentially dangerous activities will usually have to be based in a centre where properly qualified staff will supervise the activities. These centres must have appropriate insurance to cover the pupils they are catering for. It should be made clear to parents that any claims arising out of accidents will only be met where negligence has been proven. This should be noted on the appropriate form.

6. TRAVEL COMPANIES

All trips abroad should use only reputable travel companies to avoid problems in the event of a company

collapsing. Preferably these companies should be members of SAGTA (School and Group Travel Association) or ABTA.

7. DISCIPLINE

It is important to make pupils aware that, while on trips outside of school, they are representing the school and that outsiders will be taking note of their behaviour. This presupposes a high standard of discipline. Organisers and teachers will make it clear to pupils that no untoward behaviour will be tolerated either in transit or in situ. Pupils should be given the school Code of Conduct and briefed about appropriate behaviour before going on the trip. They should be reminded that: -

- Pupils with a poor record of discipline may be prevented from participating in school trips.
- Normal school rules regarding behaviour shall apply at all times.
- The school's policy on the Misuse of Drugs applies to all school trips.

It is the responsibility of organisers/teachers to maintain discipline at all times.

8. SAFETY

Safety considerations are an essential prerequisite of any school trip. It is the responsibility of the teacher in charge of a school visit to ensure that the children are adequately supervised at all times. The following conditions must be observed at all times: -

- **Teacher/Pupil ratios** should be such as to permit adequate supervision. For trips abroad the ratio should be no greater than 1:10. For day trips the ratio may be no greater than 1:15. No journey/visit involving an overnight stay should be undertaken with less than two teachers and appropriate male/female ratio.
- Regulations with regard to numbers of pupils permissible in buses must be adhered to.
- Pupils should be made aware of potential hazards and be given appropriate instructions with regard to them.
- At no time during a visit should a party be left in residential accommodation without proper teacher supervision.
- An emergency procedure should be established for every trip, to try and anticipate potential accidents. This procedure will obviously depend on the nature of the trip.

PUPILS DRIVING TO SCHOOL EVENTS

In light of recent correspondence from insurance experts in relation to pupils using their own transport to drive to sports facilities or other school related activities, we as a school have taken the decision that with immediate effect this practice is to cease.

All school organised activities will provide the necessary transport to and from the particular venues. Pupils will not be permitted to drive themselves or indeed other pupils to any school organised activities.

While we appreciate this may be an inconvenience for some we ask for parental cooperation in this directive.

9. PRINCIPAL'S RESPONSIBILITIES

If the Principal has delegated responsibility for a visit to a suitable party leader, then he/she should have ensured that he/she is satisfied that: -

- All EA visits guidelines have been followed.
- The visit is educationally justified and will not affect the efficient running of the school.
- The party leader is suitably trained, qualified or experienced.
- The Board of Governors have been notified and have authorized the visit.
- Child protection measures are in place.
- A school contact has been nominated and there is a contingency plan for delays including a late return back to school.
- Full and comprehensive information has been provided to parents including details of costings, modes of transport and the precise nature of activities the pupils will be involved in.
- Parental consent has been obtained in writing with specific consent for activities such as swimming, along with relevant pupil medical information and approval for any medical treatment necessary.
- Satisfactory insurance arrangements have been completed and the parents are aware of these.
- Supervision of the group is appropriate in relation to gender, experience and police checks.
- The mode of transport is suitable and all safety measures will be taken.
- Detailed costings of the visit have been approved.
- Appropriate cover for teachers on the visit has been organized.
- An emergency procedure has been planned with well-established lines of communication should the need arise, including the provision of a mobile telephone if requested.
- A detailed itinerary and list of names and addresses of those in the party have been obtained in accordance with the guidelines for organisers, well before departure

10. PARTY LEADER'S RESPONSIBILITIES prior to departure

The party leader has a responsibility to ensure that: -

- A detailed itinerary, list of names and addresses of those taking part is submitted well in advance to the Senior Teacher in charge of School Trips.
- A Risk Assessment document is submitted to the Vice-Principal in charge of School Trips (See Appendix 5)
- All monies have been collected and accounted for.
- Satisfactory insurance cover is provided for all members of the party.
- He/she has a reasonable prior knowledge of the group, including any special educational needs.
- Adequate arrangements are made for children with specific medical needs.
- Concerns about pupils whose behaviour may put others in the party at risk are brought to the attention of the Principal as early as possible.
- He/she is aware of Health and Safety issues regarding both staff and pupils e.g. use of seat belts in a coach or minibus.
- The teachers and supervisors have the appropriate, valid, up-to-date, recognised qualifications. The proposed activity is within the technical competence and experience of the leaders and is approved by the Principal.
- Parents have been informed by letter about the activities on the visit and their support has been enlisted regarding acceptable behaviour.
- Written consent has been obtained from the pupils' parents.
- The group has been prepared for the proposed activity.
- All supervisors and group leaders are aware of their individual and collective responsibilities.
- (As far as is possible and in advance of children being admitted to it) the intended site for a visit is suitable for the children in his/her charge and the activities to be undertaken.
- Activities to be undertaken are suitable for the nature of the site and the weather conditions existing at the time.

- All teachers and supervisors have up-to-date knowledge and information of the area, including any potential hazards.
- All teachers and supervisors are familiar with emergency procedures and support organisations in the area of operation.
- All teachers and supervisors have been briefed on suitable contingency measures should the original plan have to be changed.
- All equipment including clothing is in proper order and suitable for the proposed activity.
- All teachers and supervisors are aware of, and respect, access and conservation regulations in the area of operation.

11. PARTY LEADER'S RESPONSIBILITIES during the trip

In addition to the above responsibilities the party leader has a further responsibility to ensure that: -

- There is effective communication between adults on the visit, the pupils, their parents and the school.
- All staff on the visit are given a list of group members and that they check pupils' presence at regular intervals.
- In the event of an emergency, details are reported immediately, or as soon as practicable, to the Principal (or if not available, to any member of the SLT).
- No one speaks to the Media without the consent of the Principal.

12. DUTIES OF TEACHERS AND SUPERVISORS during the trip

It is the responsibility of the teachers and supervisors of a school visit to: -

- Be supportive of the party leader and carry out his/her instructions.
- Ensure that the pupils are adequately supervised at all times.
- Carry a list naming all the pupils on the visit.
- Be thoroughly familiar with the character and capabilities of the pupils in his/her charge.
- Be aware which pupils have special educational needs or disabilities.
- Be fully aware of the nature of the activities that the group is going to be involved in.
- Be alert to potential hazards, ensure that his/her pupils are aware of these, and take steps to avoid or minimise the risks attendant upon them.
- Be thoroughly familiar with all emergency procedures.
- Insist that pupils behave at all times in a manner that is consistent with the school's Code of Conduct and their own safety.

13. CHARGING

Under existing regulations no charges may be levied for trips which take place wholly inside normal school hours. This includes admission charges to museums, theatres etc. Charges can be made for trips which take place wholly or partly outside school hours. Partly means, in the latter case, if more than 50% of the duration of the trip is outside normal school hours. In effect, this means that extended trips, e.g. trips abroad, will need to be planned so that more than 50% of their time will be outside normal school hours.

14. EVALUATION

A Residential Trip Evaluation Form must be completed for the Senior Teacher in charge of school trips. It should include a note of any accidents or disciplinary procedures. (See Appendix 6)

15. SUMMARY OF FORMS REQUIRED

The following list indicates all the forms necessary before a school trip can go ahead.

FOR SHORT TRIPS – no longer than one day:

- APPROVAL FORM FOR SCHOOL TRIPS (ST1)
- PARENTAL CONSENT FORM (ST2)
- REGISTRATION CONSENT FORM (ST3)
- PARENTAL CONSENT FORM FOR REPEATED TRIPS (ST4)

FOR LONGER TRIPS – trips abroad or overnight:

- LETTER TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS REQUESTING SANCTION FOR PROPOSED TRIP
- RISK ASSESSMENT (See Appendix 5)
- TRAVEL FILE WITH ALL RELEVANT DETAILS LEFT WITH VICE PRINCIPAL IN CHARGE OF SCHOOL TRIPS

All relevant forms are available from the office and when completed must be returned to SLT person in charge of School Trips.

**Three days' notice must be given to
Amanda Barr for any planned absence.**



PARENTAL CONSENT FORM FOR REPEATED ACTIVITIES

FORM ST4

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

This is to inform you that your son may be participating in an extra-curricular activity which will involve trips out of school on a number of occasions. Please read both sides of this form and sign where appropriate to indicate your approval. Your son will be informed of any future arrangements and, at any time, further information can be obtained from the teacher in charge.

Teacher(s) in Charge	
Nature of Activity	
Dates (approximate times of involvement)	
Travel Arrangements	
Emergency Contact (Parent/Relative)	Name: _____ Telephone: _____ Address: _____
	Is there any information about your child, medical or otherwise, of which the organisers of this trip should be aware?

I have read the information supplied on this form and agree to my child: -

_____ (Name of Pupil)

participating in the ongoing activities identified above.

_____ (Signature of Parent/Guardian) ____ / ____ / ____ (Date)



CODE FOR PUPILS

We expect that a St. Mary's pupil will:

- Abide by the rules set down by team mentors when travelling to and from away matches.
- Play by the rules of the game.
- Behave in a manner that avoids bringing his event or St. Mary's into disrepute.
- Respect officials and accept their decisions without dissent.
- Respect opponents as partners in an event and shake hands at the end of a match.
- Respect fellow team members, give them full support both when they do well and when things go wrong.
- Conduct himself in a sportsmanlike manner at all times.
- Win with grace and lose with dignity.

St Mary's pupils are entitled to:

- Be treated with dignity, respect and equality.
- Be safe and feel safe.
- Be happy, have fun and enjoy their event.
- Experience competition and the desire to win as a positive and healthy outcome of striving for best performance.
- Be listened to by their team mentors.
- Say NO.

Being in a school team is a privilege which is dependent upon standards of work and behaviour in class and around the school.

I have read and agree to abide by the above Code of Conduct.

_____ (Signature of Pupil)

_____ (Signature of Parent)

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ST. MARY'S PUPILS ON RESIDENTIAL TRIPS

In the interests of good and safe practice the organisers of St. Mary's residential trips have developed the following Code of Conduct for pupils. The Code of Conduct has been agreed over the years with both parents and pupils. Acceptance of this code by all parties involved in the trip will allow the party leaders to carry out their responsibilities and ensure the safety of the entire party.

Each pupil should:

- Observe normal school rules
- Co-operate fully with the leaders at all times
- Fulfil any tasks or duties set prior to and during the trip.
- Participate fully in all activities and sessions during the trip.
- Be punctual at all times.
- Not leave any group sessions or accommodation without permission.
- Always return to the meeting point or accommodation at agreed times.
- If granted indirectly supervised time, be in groups of not less than three.
- Avoid behaviour that might inconvenience others.
- Be considerate to other pupils, teachers and staff at all times.
- Behave at all times in a manner which reflects credit on you, the party and the school.
- Abide by the laws, rules and regulations of the country you visit.
- Consult with staff, if in doubt about any matter.
- Accept that a full written report of any misconduct will be forwarded to the Principal and to the parent(s).

Pupils must not:

- Purchase or consume alcohol, tobacco products or any illegal substances.
- Purchase or use dangerous articles such as fireworks and knives.

St. Mary's reserves the right to withdraw a pupil at any stage from a school trip if the Principal believes that his safety or that of others may be compromised by his presence.

No compensation for any financial losses incurred by this decision will be offered by the school.

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____

Signature of Pupil _____

RISK ASSESSMENT

Issues for consideration when planning a residential visit:

- Procedures at Airport/Port
- Travel
- Rooming
- Code of Conduct
- Non-teaching supervisors
- Child protection (pupils)
- Child protection (staff)
- Medical / Special Educational needs
- Behavioural concerns

RESIDENTIAL TRIP EVALUATION FORM

Visit to:	Date: _____
Name of Leader(s)	
Teachers involved	
Pupil Groups involved:	
Comments	
Pre-visit organisation or information	
Activities/excursions	
Any accidents	
Any disciplinary problems	
Any medical problems	
Benefit gained for pupils	
Any other comment	

Purpose of Visit	
Destination/Sites to be visited	
Accommodation (if applicable)	
Date & Duration of Visit (inc times of departure & return)	
Classes/Groups involved (See Form ST3)	
Teachers/Supervisors	
Emergency Contact (Address, Phone No. etc.)	
Travel Arrangements	

Has Approval been sought from the Pastoral Vice-Principal? (Please tick)

Office	<input type="checkbox"/>	Calendar (MR)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parents' Consent Form (Form ST2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Minibus Booked	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Registration Form (Form ST3)	<input type="checkbox"/>

I have considered the information supplied by the organisers of this trip and I am satisfied that the arrangements comply with school policy. I therefore give my approval.

Signed : _____ (Vice-Principal) Date : _____

A copy of this form must be left with the Pastoral Vice-Principal

REGISTRATION FORM for PUPILS on SCHOOL VISITS (FORM ST3)



Dear Parent,

This is to inform you that your son will be going on an educational visit as indicated below. Please read this form and mark where appropriate to indicate your approval. Further information may be obtained from the teacher in charge.

Teacher in Charge	
Nature of Trip (include details of any activities)	
Dates	
Travel Arrangements	
Type of Clothing	
Lunch Details	
Emergency Contact (Parent/Relative)	Name: _____ Telephone: _____
	Address: _____
	E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____
	Is there any information about your child, medical or otherwise, of which the organisers of this trip should be aware?

I have read the information supplied on this form and agree to my child: -

_____ (Name of Pupil)

participating in the trip described.

_____ (Signature of Parent/Guardian)

_____ Date

REGISTRATION FORM for PUPILS on SCHOOL VISITS (FORM ST3)

Pupils on School Visit to: _____

Dates: _____

	Pupil's Name	Class	Receipt of Consent Form ST2
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26			

This form must be taken on the visit and a copy should be left with the Vice-Principal in charge of School Trips

APPROVALS	
Principal:	
Chair of the Board of Governors:	
Date of Approval by Governors:	
Date of next annual review:	